233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [609] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

argued that the cattle might have been brought along the course of the Zambezi and Kwando there is the objection that there are here several tsetse fly belts. On the contrary, cattle-producing country in the southwest and south of Angola is far more accessible than the Rhodesian plateau.

In the south there is the cultural habit of digging wells, especially among the Vakuanyama; but the Vachokue have not developed this trait. The substrata underlying the sand of southern Angola hold water which serves through the dry season, a fact which is advantageously employed by the cattle-keepers. The Vachokue lack this well-digging habit, and, even if subsurface water were present, the transient Ovimbundu would have lacked opportunity to dig for it when passing through hostile country.

The acquisition of cattle by the Ovimbundu is of great importance, because it is concerned with the grafting of a series of pastoral traits on a culture in no way originally associated with pastoral pursuits. The truth of this will later be made clear by examination of historical and ethnological evidence.

Geographical considerations give a picture of the Ovimbundu situated in naturally fortified country from which they had access to four surrounding areas, whose cultural characters agree well with the determinism of topography and climate. The natural advantages of the central highlands, and the results of contact with each of the adjacent areas, are points which will be developed in appropriate sections throughout the ensuing chapters.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I have seen an Ocimbundu male riding an ox without saddle. A cord was passed through the animal's nose to serve as reins. 492

The Portuguese name for horse is *cavalo*, a word which the Ovimbundu use in the form *okavalu*, though there is an Umbundu word *ocingongovala*, which means "going with his neck up." The Umbundu words for donkey and mule are *ocimbulu* and *omula*, respectively. 192

Generally speaking, the ears of animals are not clipped, neither are cattle branded or otherwise marked to indicate ownership, but sometimes the ears of pigs and goats are cut to aid identification. When asked why the tips of the ears of dogs are mutilated an Ocimbundu will say that a dog with uncut ears does not hear when called (Plate LVI, Fig. 2). 231

Not many families own large herds of cattle among the Ovimbundu, and I did not see a big kraal until I was in southwest Angola. Cattle, which are a measure of wealth, are used for paying fines, making funeral feasts, paying debts, and securing wives. The cattle throughout Angola are well-developed, handsome animals (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). The bull remains with the herd the entire year; there is therefore no particular season for the birth of calves. Usually cows are not milked by the Ovimbundu, consequently these people have no milk, butter, or cheese. The Vakuanyama of the south milk their cows and churn butter in calabashes slung on a pole. 233 556 [171]

The Ovimbundu say that milking the cow makes the calf thin, but where the idea of milking the cow is borrowed from the Portuguese the Ovimbundu have a procedure which is as follows: The calf is allowed to suck for a few minutes in order to deceive the cow; then the milker begins his work. At intervals of a few minutes the calf is allowed to suck in order to continue the deception. 234 [177]

Cattle are killed at the funeral feasts of the rich, and the horns of the slaughtered animals are generally mounted on a pole in the vicinity of the grave (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2). [765]

The horns of the cow may be used for making water-pipes in which tobacco is smoked, or they may be employed as magical horns when filled with medicine. The hide is pegged out in the sunlight for one day after it has been scraped; it is then rolled and kept until required. When about to be used, the skin is soaked in water for one day. The hide is used to cover the tops of stools, to make pouches and to manufacture bags for carrying corn. In bygone days each king had a wooden box covered with hide, which contained his powder and metal when he went to war. The cow's tail is used 237 281 90

The cow's tail is used
as a sheath for covering the iron shafts of assagais, and it is sometimes made into a switch which the rain-maker uses during his performances.

Bulls are castrated when two years old. The wound is rubbed with ashes, salt, soot, and palm oil. Bullocks are used for riding, also for pull-carts introduced by the Boers. The herd obtains most of its food by grazing. In the dry season grass withers, with the result that the animals become thin and stall-feeding is necessary. In former days cattle-raiding was a practice of the Ovimbundu, who robbed the Vacilenge. It is certain that the Ovimbundu did not own cattle when they entered Angola. If the general tradition is correct the Ovimbundu came into Angola from a northeasterly direction, from the borders of the Belgian Congo as it is called today; this is not a cattle-raising region.

The Ovimbundu of Elende have a joke against the people of Bailundu, because the latter on first seeing a cow offered the animal some food on a wooden platter. This story suggests that the Bailundu people, who are of the Ovimbundu confederacy, did not know the animal and its habits as early as did the Ovimbundu themselves.

Although the Ovimbundu do not usually kill their cattle they may do so in the months of June and July, because at this time pasture is withered and food is scarce. Animals which are diseased, aged, or injured, are killed and eaten.

The native pig is distinguishable from European breeds by its long thin snout and slender development. This breed is said by the Director of Animal Husbandry, Humpata, to be the Keltic breed (Plate LV). There is, he says, no evidence to prove that the Ovimbundu have at any time domesticated pigs from the wild hogs which are to be found in Angola. There is no family which does not own a pig, and on the whole the pig fares much better than the sheep or the goat. The pig receives water and a daily ration of food, which is usually sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated at any time between the ages of six months and one year by an operator who is a paid specialist. The fee for castrating a bull is four yards of cloth, but a small gift is considered sufficient reward for performing the operation on a pig. If a pig is thin, the leather is said to be of good quality and therefore suitable for making sheaths for knives. Usually the flesh of the pig is eaten shortly after the animal has been killed, but the meat of the bullock, on the contrary, is sometimes dried over a fire and preserved. But this is not a general practice as the animals are too valuable to be slaughtered.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

177 [197] The Ovambo include eight kindred tribes, all of whom are branches of the Bantu linguistic family to which the Ovimbundu belong. The Vakuanyama, who inhabit large tracts of southern Angola, are a numerous, warlike, pastoral branch of the Ovambo. The Vakuanyama are the only section of the cattle-keeping peoples of the southwest of Africa with whom I have made personal contact; but their culture is generally representative of that of the Ovambo and the Herero.

171 233 When making a journey southward from the country of the Ovimbundu in central Angola, there is a noticeable increase in the size of the kraals as the journey is continued. The first large kraal was observed near Kipungo, and when as far south as Mongua the wealthy cattle-keeping Vakuanyama were by far the most numerous people. Their total strength is probably about 55,000. I journeyed through the Kuanyama country in July, halfway through the dry season, but found that cattle were watered at deep wells from which men and women were constantly drawing water for the herds. Near Ondjiva, only a few miles from British South West Africa, the ruler of the Vakuanyama owned at that time 14,000 head of cattle.

After examining 1,200 objects collected in Angola, I feel sure that cultural contact between the Ovimbundu and the Vakuanyama is unimportant, so far as artifacts are concerned; but, if the inquiry turns to other aspects of culture, there is a more fruitful line of investigation.

Many beliefs and customs center in the keeping of cattle in east and south Africa. The typical cattle-keeping area begins with the Bahima in the vicinity of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The region extends down the eastern side of the continent, through the south and southwest into Damaraland. The Vakuanyama of southern Angola should be included in this area, which has homologies in respect to certain laws, ceremonies, economic customs, and religious beliefs.

The true pastoral area of the south of Angola extends at least as far north as Huila, where there is sufficient rainfall to produce good pasture in open country which is well adapted for raising stock. All the traditions of the Ovimbundu, along with the writings of Battell, suggest this southwest part of Angola as the line of entry for cattle. The Congo basin is not a pastoral country, and transportation of cattle from Rhodesia would necessitate the crossing of hundreds of miles of arid country in Moxico, eastern Angola. There remains, therefore, the cattle-keeping area of south and southwest

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Angola as the source of supply for the Ovimbundu, who both traded and made warfare with the south.

Therefore, reasonable ground exists for believing that the cultural traits that the Ovimbundu associate with the keeping of cattle have been taken over with the cattle themselves. The traits agree in principle and detail with the factors of the African cattle-keeping areas. The characteristics of this pastoral culture have been outlined by M. J. Herskovits (The Cattle Complex in East Africa, *Amer. Anth.*, XXVIII, 1926, pp. 270–272; 424–528; 630–664). I wish, however, to give prominence to the factor of sacred fire which is fundamental in the cattle-keeping culture. The importance of sacred fire in the ritual of the Ovimbundu has been demonstrated, and this trait is a most important link between the typically Negro culture of the Ovimbundu and the Hamitic pastoral culture of east Africa.

A brief summary of the salient facts of the cattle-keeping culture, such as is found in east and south Africa, will be given. This will be followed by a statement of the cultural traits associated with the keeping of cattle among the Ovimbundu in order to demonstrate similarities of custom.

In describing cattle-keeping people of the Lakes region J. Roscoe (VI) outlines a pre-pastoral condition characterized by agricultural pursuits which still survive near Ruwenzori and Elgon. Of the pastoral people the most conservative are the Banyankole of Ankole, among whom all social customs fall into line with the keeping of cattle. Milk is the principal food, and strong purgatives are taken after eating vegetable food, which is regarded as unclean. Agriculturists are a serf class who are not allowed to have milk. A woman of the pastoral class would not accept a husband from the agricultural people, because they are social inferiors. In such a community one finds a strict preservation of customs centering in cattle. Bulls are killed beside the grave of a chief, while cows are dedicated to the dead chief at whose shrine their milk is offered daily (p. 21).

Roscoe's account of the worship of the dead in Uganda (III) further explains customs that are characteristic of pastoral communities in which the connection between cattle-keeping and kingship is important. The death of the king is not announced and the fact of death is kept secret for several days until preparations for the succession have been made. "The fire is extinct" is a euphemism which refers to the death of the king. The king is buried in a hut surrounded by a fence. This hut is later visited by the new king

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

233 174 who cleans and decorates the jawbone of his predecessor, then preserves it in a case of lion skin. Among the Basoga the skull of the king is cleaned and stitched in cowhide. It is then placed in a temple where a medium lives in order to converse with the ghost of the king (p. 43). The Bunyoro line the grave of a king with cowhide, and the slaughtered cows are said to serve the dead king with milk in a spirit world.

Roscoe (I, p. 101) states that the Bahima wrap the body of a king in the skin of a freshly killed cow; the deities are not often invoked, but attention is paid to ancestral ghosts (p. 109). There is a Bahima custom of making blood brotherhood by drinking blood mixed with milk (p. 117). The Banyankole (Roscoe, V, p. 32), institute a blood brotherhood by rubbing each other with blood drawn from their navels by an arrow. The body of a king is sewn in cowhide (p. 58). A cow is killed and eaten at the grave of a chief (p. 146).

171 A further examination of Roscoe's observations (IV) adds corroborative information. The Bakitara have rain-makers for each district (p. 28). There is a ritual for establishing blood brotherhood (p. 46). At the king's death all fires in the royal enclosure are extinguished; so also are the fires in each royal cow kraal. Fresh fires are made by friction in the new royal enclosure from which fire is distributed to the kraals (p. 47). The Bakitara test two litigants or accused persons by asking each to provide chickens which are made to take poison (p. 70). The death of the king is not announced for some days; he is said to be asleep. A young bull is killed to provide a shroud for the king's body (p. 121). The king's spear and walking stick are kept in the tomb (p. 126). At the death of a king of the Baganda the guardian of the king's sacred fire is strangled. A war leader rubs himself with ashes from the sacred fire in order to increase his strength and courage (Roscoe, II, pp. 103, 349).

The concept of the sacred fire has spread, not only down the east side of Africa and into Angola, but northeastward to the Lotuko-speaking peoples. Here a new fire has to be kindled at the initiation of a member of the drum-house. At puberal initiation ceremonies for boys, the rain-maker creates new fire with twirling sticks, which are never again used, though they are preserved. All fires in the village are extinguished before the new fires are made. The freshly ignited fire is distributed first to drum-houses then to the homes (C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, Sudan Notes and Records, VIII, pp. 12,